



RFDS 15.00 PREVENTABLE ALARM ORDINANCE PROCEDURE

15.1; PURPOSE

Provide a guide for Company Officers to follow when responding to false fire alarm activations and to implement Redmond's Preventable Fire Alarm Ordinance.

15.2; REFERENCE

Redmond Municipal Code Section 15.06.08; Redmond Fire Department Standard #14

15.3; DEFINITIONS

15.1.1; Preventable fire alarm: The activation of any fire protection or alarm system which results in the response of the Fire Department and is caused by malfunction, improper maintenance, negligence, or misuse, of the system by an owner, occupant, employee, or agent, or any other activation not caused by excessive heat, smoke, fire, or similar activating event.

15.1.1.1; Preventable alarms shall include situations such as the following:

- a. Erroneous transmission of an alarm or trouble signal by a fire alarm monitoring company.
- b. Transmission of an alarm or trouble signal while working on a fire protection system connected to an alarm system when reasonable steps were not taken to prevent the reporting of an alarm to the Fire Department.
- c. Transmission of an alarm or trouble signal during fire drills, or testing of a fire protection or alarm system when reasonable steps were not taken to prevent the reporting of an alarm to the Fire Department.
- d. Work such as painting, welding, cleaning, cooking, dust producing activities, or similar which activate a signal from the fire alarm system.
- e. Accidental activation of a fire alarm system or component when reasonable steps were not taken to prevent the activation and reporting of an alarm to the Fire Department.
- f. Damaging any system device, panel, wiring or component when reasonable steps were not taken to prevent such damage and the reporting of an alarm to the Fire Department.
- g. Improper installation or use of system components, including location in, or near, atmospheres incompatible with the device (moisture, acidic, high air flow, vents, fans, dust, etc).
- h. Installation of unapproved or incompatible components or devices, or improper modification to components or devices which result in a signal from the fire alarm system.
- i. Activation of the alarm for a non emergency situation that does not warrant an emergency Fire Department response.



15.1.1.1; Preventable alarms shall not include situations such as the following:

- a. System activation due to actual fire, explosion, smoke production, overheating, or similar that did or could have produced fire.
- b. Manual activation of a fire alarm where it was believed a fire or other emergency existed which required Emergency Fire Department response.
- c. A system signal caused by unintentional release of steam, heat, gases, water, or vapor which might activate a detector when reasonable steps have been taken to prevent such release.
- d. A system signal caused by earthquake, lightning, or other natural occurrences that result in power fluctuations, movement, or flooding of a building.
- e. Work on telephone lines or central office equipment that causes disruption in the signal, or produces erroneous signals, when reasonable steps have been taken to prevent such disruption.
- f. Accidental activation of a fire alarm system or component when reasonable steps have been taken to prevent the activation and reporting of an alarm to the Fire Department.

15.1.2; Responsible Party: An employee acting on behalf of a company with a contractual relationship with the owner or occupant shall be considered to be under the direction of their company and generally the company shall be held responsible for the actions of the employee that have caused a preventable alarm. If the initiation is not directly attributable to the action of an individual, company, or occupant, the owner or owner's agent shall be responsible for the preventable alarm. The owner shall not be considered to have caused a preventable alarm if such preventable alarm is caused by malicious action of another who is not under the control of, nor under contract with, the owner.

15.1.3; Fire Watch: When a fire protection system is under repair or for any reason is unable to transmit an alarm signal, the Fire Code Official is authorized to require a fire watch per Redmond Fire Department Standard #14. Failure to maintain a continuous and systematic fire watch, failure to have a working method of notifying fire dispatch of an incident, or failure to comply with written directions of the Fire Code Official shall constitute a failure to maintain the alarm system and the individual, or company providing the fire watch, or the building owner or the owner's agent shall be subject to a fee per the adopted fee schedule of no less than the fee for a preventable alarm.

15.2; PROCEDURES

Once a fire alarm has been determined to be preventable as per the definitions above, the following procedures shall be followed:

15.2.1; SCENE OPERATIONS

15.2.1.1; Determining Cause. The reporting officer shall take the following actions at a fire response once it has been determined to be the result of a false activation of a fire alarm or fire suppression system:

- Silence the system as soon as possible.
 - Most alarm panels can not be able to be silenced when the panel is sensing an active water flow condition.



- Evaluate the situation to determine the cause and document the problem as follows:
 - Determine who was responsible for the initiating of the preventable alarm
 - Complete a "*Preventable Response Report*" at the scene
 - Complete the Fire Data Management (FDM) Incident Report

15.2.1.2; Notifications on scene

- Provide a short report to the fire alarm monitoring company through Fire Dispatch:
 - Your findings concerning the cause of the alarm
 - Ask for the subscriber (e.g. person responsible for the system) be notified immediately
 - Request an alarm and fire suppression system service technician, as warranted.

Example Verbal Reports

- "The Fire Department has reset the system with no fire found" (or the appropriate condition found)
 - "The Fire Department is clearing the scene, leaving the building fire alarm system silenced in alarm condition with no fire found (or the appropriate condition found). Please notify the subscriber a 24/7 fire watch is required until repaired".
 - The Fire Department is clearing the scene, requiring the building fire alarm system to be left off line pending repairs, with no fire found (or the appropriate condition found). Please notify the subscriber a 24/7 fire watch is required until repaired".
- The individual, company, occupant, owner, or the agent for the occupant or owner responsible for initiating the preventable alarm shall receive the completed "*Preventable Response Report*" from the Engine Company Officer. The Officer shall explain the fee and definitions on the reverse side of the form.
 - In the event there is no responsible party on the premises, a "*Preventable Response Report*" shall be completed by the Company Officer and forwarded to the Fire Prevention Division for follow up. Completion of the form shall not take the place of FDM National Fire Incident Management System (NFIRS) reports, which should reflect the details of the incident, including any referral to the Fire Prevention Division.
 - The Duty Fire Investigator may be requested to respond if the condition of the fire alarm and/or the situation creates an imminent fire or life-safety condition that needs immediate correction. Note: It is expected that the reporting Officer will be able to investigate, document and resolve most occurrences of false fire alarm activations without assistance.

15.2.1.2; Leaving the Scene

- Alarm systems can be put on "hold" with the monitoring company at the discretion of the Company Officer provided the building owner or their representative is notified to implement and maintain a fire watch per RFD Standard #14. A request to notify the the building owner or their representative through Fire Dispatch to the alarm monitoring company will be deemed sufficient if no responsible party is on/ responds to the site.



- Alarm systems can be reset at the discretion of the Company Officer as follows:
 - If the cause of the alarm has been determined
 - A service technician is not required to repair or service the alarm system
 - Confirmation of reset is made to the reporting alarm monitoring company
- Leave the scene after making a reasonable attempt to notify a representative for all tenants currently in the building that:
 - The alarm and/or fire suppression system is out of service
 - The alarm monitoring company has been instructed to notify the building owner

15.2.2; INCIDENT REPORT

15.2.2.1; The reporting Officer will complete the following within the required time frames:

- NFIRS information in FDM fire report
- *"Preventable Response Report"* (if applicable). Completed reports shall be forwarded to the Fire Prevention Division for follow up prior to the end of the shift.

15.2.2.2; A follow-up e-mail to the Assistant Fire Marshal can be made if the reporting Officer feels the issue needs immediate action.

15.2.3; FIRE PREVENTION FOLLOW-UP

Fire Prevention follow-up on the following false fire alarm incidents will normally take place during normal business hours within two (2) business days following the incident using the details documented by the reporting Officer in FDM and the completed *"Preventable Response Report"*, if applicable.

15.2.3.1; The Assistant Fire Marshal shall review all submitted *"Preventable Response Reports"* and other supporting documentation to make final determination that the response was "preventable" as defined above. The reporting Officer shall be notified of this determination by e-mail.

15.2.3.2; The Assistant Fire Marshal shall immediately forward the *"Preventable Response Report"* and other supporting documentation for all responses determined to be preventable to the Fire Prevention Administrative Assistant for billing within two (2) business days after receipt.

15.2.3.3; Duty Fire Investigator's who respond to and/or Fire Inspectors assigned to follow-up on preventable response reports shall e-mail or verbally reply to the reporting Officer with seven (7) business days of assignment to the incident.